

News Release

For Immediate Release: DATE

Contact: Water System Manager or Spokesperson

XXX-XXX-XXXX

<WATER SYSTEM > Issues Drinking Water Warning to Customers

OLYMPIA — The <WATER SYSTEM> is alerting its customers that recent test results show nitrate in drinking water at levels above safe drinking water standards. Customers with infants less than one year of age and pregnant women should use an alternative source of drinking water until further notice. Tap water should not be used to make baby formula or juice.

Nitrate is a chemical used in fertilizers and is also found in animal and human waste. It can enter drinking water from failing septic systems, storm water run-off, or contaminated groundwater. Boiling water will not reduce health risks of nitrate exposure – instead it can make the nitrate more concentrated. The only way to remove nitrate from the water is through treatment.

Drinking water with nitrate at high levels can cause a condition called methemoglobinemia – known as blue baby syndrome. Methemoglobinemia reduces the body’s ability to carry oxygen through the blood. Infants are at greater risk than older children and adults. Symptoms can develop quickly, usually within a period of a few days. If an infant shows signs of blue baby syndrome – bluish skin and shortness of breath – seek medical attention immediately.

“We are very concerned about the health and safety of our community. We are working with the Department of Health to identify any water treatment options or other improvements that we can make to restore safe drinking water for our customers,” said <SYSTEM SPOKESPERSON>

Customers with infants less than a year of age, pregnant women, and others who may be susceptible (those with blood enzyme deficiencies) should use an alternative source of drinking water for preparing food, making ice, etc. This health advisory will remain in effect until the Department of Health is confident water is safe to drink. For more information, contact <WATER SYSTEM CONTACT> at XXX-XXX-XXXX.

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